

and the most cruel of deaths, by fire.... Both the initiation and carrying out of this new principle must be ascribed to the Popes alone.... It was the Popes who compelled bishops and priests to condemn the heterodox to torture, confiscation of their goods, imprisonment, and death, and to enforce these executions of this sentence on the civil authorities, under pain of excommunication. From 1200 to 1500 the long series of Papal ordinances on the Inquisition, ever increasing in severity and cruelty, and their whole policy towards heresy, runs on without a break. It is a rigidly consistent system of legislation; every pope confirms and improves upon the devices of his predecessor.... It was only the absolute dictation of the Popes and the notion of their infallibility in all questions of Evangelical morality, that made the Christian world... [accept] the Inquisition, which contradicted the simplest principles of Christian justice and love to our neighbor, and would have been rejected with universal horror in the ancient church.³

During this same period, and into the twentieth century, the Roman Church-State was becoming more and more explicitly committed to the idea of a world government, headed by a temporal ruler who received his authority from the pope and who was subservient to the pope.⁴ Nothing in recent years has changed that fundamental position of the Roman Church-State; indeed, recent popes have reiterated the need for a world government.

Protestant American clergymen, as well as a few theological liberals, once recognized what the Roman Church-State is, as can be seen from this quotation from a sermon delivered by Tunis Wortman in 1800, "A Solemn Address to Christians and Patriots":

If you are real Christians, anxious for the honor and purity and interest of the Christian church, you will feel a steady determination to preserve it from corruption. Unless you maintain the pure and primitive spirit of Christianity, and prevent the cunning and intrigue of statesmen from mingling with it institutions, you will become exposed to a renewal of the same dreadful and enormous scenes which have not only disgraced the annals of the Church, but destroyed the peace, and sacrificed the lives of millions. It is by such scenes and by such dreadful crimes that Christianity has suffered; by such fatal and destructive enormities which, since the days of Constantine, have been perpetrated without intermission,

3. Ignaz von Döllinger, *The Pope and the Council*. London, 1869, 190-193.

4. The pope is "...the highest authority on earth,..." according to Pius XI in his 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, 7.

perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate and convert to the use and profit of yourself and your successors...in perpetuity, the above-mentioned kingdoms, duchies, counties, principalities, and other property and possessions and suchlike goods....¹⁵

This was done because the popes were "justly desiring that whatsoever concerns the integrity and spread of the faith, for which Christ our God shed his blood, shall flourish in the virtuous souls of the faithful..." In 1493, the same papal permission to slaughter, loot, subjugate, and enslave was granted to Spain not just for campaigns against Africa, but for campaigns against the newly discovered Americas as well. Maxwell remarked that "Portugal and Spain were understood by the Holy See to be at war with the enemies of Christendom – the Negroes of West Africa and the 'Indians' of America – wherever they may be."¹⁶ In 1548, Paul III issued a *motu proprio*, dealing with slavery in Rome:

By reason of our pastoral office, we gladly attend to the troubles of individual Christians, as far as we can with God's help; and having regard to the fact that the effect of a multitude of slaves is that inherited estates are enriched, agricultural property is better looked after and cities are extended, and desiring to provide security against loss for the people as well as their profit, of our own free will we approve and confirm the above-mentioned enactments and orders...; and nevertheless, as a greater precaution [we decree] that each and every person of either sex, whether Roman or non-Roman, whether secular or clerical, and no matter of what dignity, status, degree, order, or condition they be, may freely and lawfully buy and sell publicly any slaves whatsoever of either sex, and make contracts about them as is accustomed to be done in other places, and publicly hold them as slaves and make use of their work, and compel them to do the work assigned to them. And with Apostolic authority, by the tenor of these present documents, we enact and decree in perpetuity that slaves who flee to the Capitol and appeal for their liberty shall in no wise be freed from the bondage of their servitude, but that notwithstanding their flight and appeal of this sort they shall be returned in slavery to their owners, and if it seems proper they shall be punished as runaways; and we very strictly forbid our beloved sons who for the time being are *conservatori* of the said city to presume by their authority to emancipate the aforesaid slaves – who flee as previously described and

15. As quoted in Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church*, 53.

16. Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church*, 56.

appeal for their liberty – from the bondage of their slavery, irrespective of whether they were made Christians after enslavement, or whether they were born in slavery even from Christian slave parents....¹⁷

From the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries the popes themselves owned galley-slaves for their naval squadron.

In 1866, the Vatican issued the following statement on slavery and slave trading:

[S]lavery itself, considered as such in its essential nature, is not at all contrary to the natural and divine law, and there can be several just titles of slavery and these are referred to by approved theologians and commentators of the sacred canons.... From this it follows that it is not contrary to the natural and divine law for a slave to be sold, bought, exchanged or donated, provided that in this sale, purchase, exchange, or gift, the due conditions are strictly observed which the approved authors likewise describe and explain. Among these conditions the most important ones are that the purchaser should carefully examine whether the slave who is put up for sale has been justly or unjustly deprived of his liberty, and that the vendor should do nothing which might endanger the life, virtue, or Catholic faith of the slave who is to be transferred to another's possession.¹⁸

Maxwell concludes his summary of Roman Catholic moral teaching on slavery with these words:

If Adolf Hitler has decided to inquire from the Catholic authorities, between 1933 and 1945, whether the institution of slavery in labour camps for condemned criminals was morally legitimate, and whether it was morally right to enslave foreign non-Christian prisoners in just warfare and use them to work in German factories, there is regrettably little doubt that he would have received the reply that there was a "probable opinion" in the affirmative.¹⁹

17. As quoted in Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church*, 75. American Chief Justice Roger Taney, author of the decision in the famous *Dred Scott* case, was a Roman Catholic.

18. As quoted in Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church*, 78-79.

19. Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church*, 124.